

A PROFESSOR OF LIFE

By
CARROLL PERRY

Among the outstanding figures in the history of education in New England, Professor Arthur Latham Perry, of Williams College, has become a tradition. In this book, his son has written of him with a union of deep feeling and rich humor which makes a book of absorbing interest for all to whom the note of human reality in literature appeals.

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DAMAGED SOULS

By Gamaliel Bradford

SOME six thousand years ago, Eve ate an apple, and it is pretended that all her descendants since that fatal moment have had some vice, some damage, some spiritual taint, some spot of the original contamination which makes them as unfit for heaven as they are indisposed for hell. By the broad and careless exercise of exceptional powers and abilities, or even by mere accident, certain figures in American history have attained an undesirable prominence which greatly accentuates the damage inherent in all humanity.

Mr. Bradford has selected a varied group of these, and, without attempting to belittle the damage, has emphasized the large and kindly human elements which make it possible for us to sympathize with the men even while we condemn their acts. The whole group, Benedict Arnold, Thomas Paine, Aaron Burr, John Randolph, John Brown, P. T. Barnum, Ben Butler, forms a strange, robust, picturesque company, and reader as well as author must find enough of himself in them to be absorbed and fascinated by the study of their damaged souls.

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A PROFESSOR OF LIFE

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A SKETCH OF
ARTHUR LATHAM PERRY
OF WILLIAMS COLLEGE

BY HIS SON
CARROLL PERRY



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TO THE DEAR MEMORY OF
FRANCIS UNDERWOOD PERRY
A GRADUATE OF HARVARD COLLEGE
A YOUTH OF BRILLIANT PROMISE
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS INSCRIBED
WITH GRATITUDE

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CHAPTER I
LAISSEZ FAIRE

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CHAPTER I

LAISSEZ FAIRE

MY father was a New Hampshire boy, and this he never forgot. His mother, Lydia Gray, had married Baxter Perry, of Worcester, a graduate of Harvard College in the class of 1817, and they had settled in the parish of Lyme, New Hampshire, where Grandfather was the pastor of the Congregational Church.

In the Harvard class of 1817, numbering sixty-nine, there were groups of very able men; and it was known for years afterward as the "Abolition Class." It included David Lee Child, Samuel Joseph May, Stephen Higginson Tyng, the Rector of St. George's Church in New York, Stephen Salisbury of Worcester,

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and Samuel Eliot Sewall. Anti-slavery men all, reformers, editors, organizers; staunch supporters, too, of William Lloyd Garrison.

Other distinguished members were Caleb Cushing, Samuel Atkins Eliot, the father of President Charles W. Eliot, George Barrell Emerson (the schoolmaster), Alva Woods, and George Bancroft, the historian.

Father always entertained the notion that my grandfather was good, but dull. Just how he arrived at conviction on either point I am unable to say, since he was not born till several months after Grandfather's death. So inconsiderable a circumstance as this, however, would seem small deterrent to a critic possessing my father's gift for generalization; but I am bound to say that the homilies Grandfather left behind him lend color to my father's contention. There was one sermon of his, however, that had excellent merit. It was written by my grandmother on a bet.

After Cambridge Baxter Perry had studied

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theology at Andover. One of the traditions of his Seminary days was that he used to be called on, regularly, to cut the hair of the first great American scholar who achieved a European reputation, Moses Stuart, Professor of Semitic Languages.

Perhaps this happened to Grandfather because he was very poor; perhaps because of his familiarity with Hebrew roots. May we not let that pass?

Dartmouth College was not more than a dozen miles from Father's birthplace; nevertheless, the powerful name and reputation of President Mark Hopkins, of Williams, drew the ambitious country lad past Hanover, and beyond Cambridge, to the little college nestling among the mountains of Western Massachusetts, that was to be his home till the close of a long and very happy life. Here at Williams College he matriculated in August, 1848, being then eighteen years of age.

Upon his arrival in Williamstown by stage-

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coach over Hoosac Mountain, he spent his first night at the old "Union House"; and he never omitted to recount to his awe-struck children the horrors of his disillusionment by reason of the rioting, drunkenness, and profanity of a party of upper-classmen who were celebrating in an adjoining room the beginning of a new academic year.

For a strictly moral motive, such as impressing upon the minds of his sons the exceeding iniquity of "wicked men," Father's gift of exaggeration could always find ample employment. Among all his dealings with his boys perhaps this was the only note of unreality. For our good there was apt to be an over-stimulation of moral indignations, a somewhat excessive virtue for purely domestic use. No man ever could have been so wicked as Father could make him look. He was the perfect artist of depravity; he fairly reeked with perdition.

A less harmful use of exaggeration was wont to be exhibited in his local historical discov-

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eries, particularly in the field of genealogy. He could always see in a half-obliterated cellar-hole on a back road the foundations of a once stately colonial mansion and the number of "exceedingly distinguished men" supplied by the rural population of Williamstown in the eighteenth century came to incredible size.

Our earliest ancestor in this country was also, it seemed, a very distinguished man. The Perrys had come to Massachusetts Bay in 1638; yet, some years ago, when the writer happened to be investigating for another purpose the ancient records of Watertown, he discovered with a smile that the only mention ever made of our notable ancestor in the history of that community was this: he had once been appointed, on a committee of three, to secure an iron fence with which to enclose the village cemetery! A safe man, this, and a conservative. Dear old Father! his was a chronic case of historic imagination; his geese were always super-swans.

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Perhaps it is best, before continuing with the more strictly individual characteristics of a very winning and impelling personality, to say something, at the very start, in regard to my father's economic position and to his services in the advancement of economic studies in America.

When he began his instruction at Williams College, serious economic studies in the United States were only in their infancy. Statesmen like Hamilton, Madison, and Gallatin in the early days of our history had studied many economic questions with great intelligence, but had not developed the subject in any systematic fashion. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century there were several American writers who produced general treatises. Cooper did this, and Phillips and Tucker. Raymond did it, and Carey and Wayland. Of all these only Carey had done anything of much significance, and his work does not now seem very important. It had in its day, how-

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ever, a considerable hold among Protectionist writers in the United States, and also in Germany. But most of the American writers of this period followed rather closely the lead of the classical English School.

Coming to the period between 1850 and 1870, a new group of writers appear, men of greater originality and importance. This group included Amasa Walker, David A. Wells, William G. Sumner, F. A. Dunbar, and Arthur Latham Perry. They gave greater vogue to economic studies, and laid the foundation of the larger structure that followed.

My father adopted certain ideas from the French economist Frédéric Bastiat, and applied them in such a fresh and original way as to attract great attention. Also, he was influenced by the English economist, McLeod, who had done much to develop the Theory of Credit. My father's several treatises of Political Economy were more original than any that preceded, except those of Carey, the Protec-

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tionist; and by 1870 he and William G. Sumner, of Yale, and David A. Wells were recognized as the three leading exponents of free-trade theories and policies and had become economists of national repute. They were active in the criticism of the Protectionist policies inherited from the period of the Civil War; and did much to develop the tariff-reform or free-trade views which finally culminated in a campaign for tariff reduction inaugurated by President Cleveland in 1887. By that time Sumner, Wells, and Perry were the great protagonists of tariff-reform views enlisting the interest and support of a large number of people, especially of many young men in the colleges, and of men who had recently graduated from college.

While it is somewhat difficult to estimate the comparative influence exerted by these three men, probably it should be said that Wells and Sumner were able to exert a greater influence than my father; the first, by reason of the official position he held for a short time after the

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Civil War, and the second, by reason of the broader scope of his studies, and his work upon the foundations of human society. Without doubt, however, his influence was very considerable — formidable, the Protectionists always thought, and the men generally who were out for *The Iron Stag Upon The Lawn*.

My father's contributions to economic theory were probably not of a lasting character. His substitution of the word "value" for the word "wealth," and his attempt to restate the science of economics in terms of value classified as commodities, services, and credits, does not seem to have made a permanent impress upon economic thought. It did stamp him, however, as an original thinker and gave him a national and even an international reputation. Adhering to the Manchester School of "Laissez Faire," his faith, like that of the Manchester men, in the beneficent working of economic freedom was somewhat overdone. Perhaps the

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economic truth lies somewhere in between the optimism he entertained and the pessimism of the modern socialist. The same thing probably is true of the Free Trade Controversy in which Father was so intensely interested and which came so near to monopolizing his total economic thought and his teaching of Political Economy. His faith here was somewhat overdone. Looking back upon his work at the present time, it is fairly clear that he does not rank as a great economist; but it should be added that the United States has not yet produced an economist of the first rank. He was a leading figure in his generation, and that is about all that this country has thus far exhibited.

However, the clearness of his exposition, the force and plainness of his style, his frontal attack upon the citadel of Protectionism, his enthusiasm, humor, and satire, his moral earnestness, his love of young men, his freedom from every form of pettiness and selfishness, made him a notable figure as a College Profes-

sor. Essentially he was an Advocate; not a Scientist in the strict sense of that term.

I have called him an Advocate, but to me he was always much more than that. He seemed an apostle of the Faith. He had been called to prophesy, to preach to the world the glad tidings of Free Trade, to offer to unwilling ears the secret of human restoration, to hold forth the golden key of the world's future.

When on Christmas Mornings the fields glistened with snow, and my father read aloud to us in the little old volume of Milton that his father had won as a prize at Harvard College, and came to that passage in the glorious Hymn of the Nativity where

“No War, or battle's sound,
Was heard the World around;
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;”

he was always deeply moved, rapt by the vision of a new and better world for mankind.

Thus, in the atmosphere of my boyhood days, there was something esoteric; it was my

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belief that at home we constituted a sort of sacred sect. I always cherished a most delicious feeling of moral superiority, tasting all the pleasures of martyrdom without any of its inconveniences. My father might think and write and pray about these Tariff-Barriers, but as for me I would not have had them removed for anything.

The arrival of the Foreign Mail, with communications from the old British idealists, always deepened this sense of importance. Besides the capture of strange postage-stamps, there was the excitement of a possible letter from John Bright or a pamphlet from Sir Lyon Playfair. This last I particularly loved. There was a great pile of them in our attic, and I can recall holding them up one by one into the sun-ray streaming from the skylight wherein danced a million specks of dust, and reading aloud, not the subject-matter, for I never opened the pages, but the name on the cover, "Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir

Lyon Playfair" (I think still it is the finest name in the world).

But the height of my glory was reached one day when coming home from the public school I overheard the village politician say to a group of idlers, "How the hell can a Professor on his own salary send six children through college? He can't and he don't. It's bein' done secretly by the Cobden Club of London."

Again, years afterward, the same keen consciousness of being set apart came over me once more. Spending a week-end at a charming country-house in New England, the message was brought to me that an old friend of my father, for forty years a fellow laborer in the vineyard, desired to see me at his place adjoining. His was a great name in the annals of the Cause, and if Saint Barnabas ever had a son summoned into the presence of Saul of Tarsus I know just how he felt. The old gentleman, whose voice and pen had been potent for decades, was seated in the rich study of a glori-

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ous mansion. I had felt on my way across the lawn somewhat apologetic for having chosen the Church for my profession. Ought not I also to have devoted my life to the Cause?

“I have sent for you,” announced the old Economist and Reformer, “on account of my profound regard for your father, and in order that you might participate with me *in my regular morning cocktail*.”

It was, perhaps, the most ludicrous scene of my life. The delightful old man pulled himself to his feet, raised his glass, and said, “Here’s to your good father, and to the Cause!” Each of us took into his system a very stiff drink, and I added, with becoming solemnity “To Yourself and to Laissez Faire!”

CHAPTER II

SUNDAYS WITH FATHER

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SUNDAYS WITH FATHER

FATHER had all the natural gifts for effective public speech. He was tall of stature, with an inborn dignity and grace of bearing. His head was noble, his eyes blue and full of light. The nose, almost invariably the index of mental power, was perfect in fullness, straightness, and strength. He had a musical voice of great richness and beauty which he used with studious care; a voice of depth and range, an utterance precise without being finical, and an articulation that was a joy to ear and mind. His temper, naturally violent, was generally under superb control. He was a man of strong passions, and his speech showed it. Logic, humor, scorn, humaneness, earnestness, and satire all blended in the impulse to convince or convict. He loved laughter, and no

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man could laugh either so loud or so long. If he laughed immoderately at others, he enjoyed fully as much — and this is rare — the shafts directed against himself. A lifelong victim of practical jokes, he dearly loved to recount them. Two things he hated with a perfect hatred: debt and meanness.

Almost invariably the old-time New England college professor was a clergyman, or, at least, he exercised with greater or less regularity the ministerial office. Father, consequently, was a preacher of the Word. In his long black frock-coat of broadcloth, and his high silk hat that had certainly been shiny within a reasonable number of years, but had suffered from rumpling at the hands of his numerous children, he would set forth on a Sunday morning for the church in South Williamstown which was the meeting-house of the rural population and the boys of Greylock Institute.

In those days the family horse would bear the name of some distinguished political econo-

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mist. The fame and public service of Richard Cobden, his gentleness and winsomeness, was perpetuated in the Perry family by an equine beast, half horse, half devil; and the knightly son of Limoges, Michel Chevalier, famous author of "*Cours d'économie politique*," was memorialized by a creature we called "Chev," that was a veritable reincarnation of Beelzebub.

Behind such sons of Belial we would drive to our destination seated side by side in the old blue-lined carry-all, a prehistoric vehicle that swayed from left to right, but was able to support the shock of any collision whatever. Formidable in action, when housed and at rest, it loomed a Castle of Childhood. With half a dozen boys inside, it could resist the siege of twice that force, and many pitched battles were joined around those sturdy chariot wheels. Then, too, it could be turned into the most wonderful of libraries, an overarching place of retirement, shadowy, comfortable, remote.

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What adept in magic was the author of "The Headless Horseman," a mighty tale of Texas, where lived Louise Poindexter, and her chocolate-colored mustang? Well, I read *that* there. Life has been very satisfying and full of fine adventure, but where, oh! where are Louise Poindexter and her mustang? I have never found them. Louise, Louise, how you sat your mount, and how graceful you looked when you bent your lithe body and went down among the cottonwoods!

Father was the most delightful of companions, but not on the way to church. Here his preoccupation was intense. He would keep humming to himself; and as the carriage wheels in the dust creaked their accompaniment, he was revolving in his mind the ideas for his sermon. For his sermons always had a place for ideas. The text was likely to be out of the Old Testament, since this he dearly loved; it was so human, so picturesque, so full of noble poetry, so religious, so true. And the men in it! When

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they were wicked, they were so damnably wicked; and with what relentless enthusiasm he would show them up!

Individualistic in all things, he was so in his public and private reading of Holy Writ. He did not use the Bible that other people used. He used the translation of Dr. Noyes, a Unitarian divine of Harvard University, whose rendering of the Scriptures he regarded as far more accurate and scholarly than the King James Version. No fallacy of the Protectionists did he combat with sounder vehemence than the rendering made by the King James men of the opening verse of Hebrews 11, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

"What eternal nonsense!" he would declare, at family prayers; "what abysmal ignorance of the Greek original!" This would never do, and we listened to the worthy Noyes: "Faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen."

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We were encouraged to ask questions at family prayers, but some subjects were full of danger. It was perilous, for instance, especially on Saturday mornings, to start anything about the "Nature of Human Language." Here were six children, each with his plan for the day; but the mutability of language was one of Father's favorite topics, and often before we knew it we had set sail with old Hobbes in the Leviathan and were off for a considerable voyage, flying at the mast head this signal, "Words are wise men's counters, but the money of fools."

Father felt only a pallid interest in theology, and his discourses were free from dogma. This was remarkable; for his spiritual background, early training, and college climate were theological in the last degree. He was a preacher for conduct, and a professor of life. I wonder how many hundred times, at home on Sunday evenings, I heard him quote his favorite lines of Whittier:

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“Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?
Who talks of scheme and plan?
The Lord is God! He needeth not
The poor device of man.”

His sermons had that first essential of all good preaching — they were interesting. Also, they were vital; for the college world being a microcosm, he had gotten from living contacts with young men, decade after decade, a knowledge of the world pretty much as it is. His friendships were deep, tolerant in the main, and exceedingly varied. What interested him, both as preacher and teacher, was the problem of the moral life, and what he believed Christianity had to say about it. He spoke out with deep earnestness, engaging frankness, and an unconventionality positively bewildering. His use of the Old Testament was at all times delightful, but now and again unconvincing. While I have always had faith to believe that Eber begat Peleg (Genesis 10.25), and that some time subsequently he also begat Peleg's brother

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Joktan, it was never clear to me that Peleg must necessarily have been an advocate of a Protective Tariff. But wait a moment! The name Peleg, in Hebrew, means "Division"; and now we are off! For the quarry is in sight — Protectionism and the Republican Party.

Candor compels me to state that the instance just mentioned is wanting in historicity. Technically it is unfounded, but morally it is absolutely correct. I will, however, say this: I have heard Father, at family prayers, bring a railing accusation against no less a person than Tiglath Pileser the Second for what seemed to him obvious Protectionist leanings.

One artistic defect might have been noted in his sermons. Occasionally his vivid imagination overmastered him and he defeated his moral purpose by his very exuberance. In his famous extempore discourse on "Pitching One's Tent Toward Sodom," preached in the College Chapel, he was attacking Tobacco. He pictured the innocent-looking cigarette; its vir-

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gin whiteness, its delicious aroma, its availability for quick solace, its charm as a social symbol, its cheapness considered as an economic product, and so forth, and so on, till the Conscience was put to sleep and it seemed as if "the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the whole house was filled with smoke." He had poured out the baby with the bath. That sermon, just as it stood, would have netted thousands to the American Tobacco Company.

Driving home from the South Williamstown church, Father was always charming. Having gotten his morning sermon out of his system, he would expatiate upon a hundred topics of keen interest to a boy. Here was a cellar-hole that marked a home from which three boys went out to the Revolutionary War. Down that side of the mountain flowed Money Brook. Why "Money" Brook? Because of the ancient counterfeiter who betook himself with his trade into that wilderness. There upon

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the hill, in that gloomy old brick house, dwelt a poor crazy creature, sometimes met on the lonely road mumbling through her straggling white hair. Her fixed idea was this, that she was to be wed to Louis Philippe. And who was King Louis Philippe? Then he would tell me. All the farmers and the farmers' wives and the farmers' children wanted to talk with him on the way home. So we pulled up at this gate and that, listened to the short and simple annals while Father gave counsel in his hearty optimistic way and made everybody feel better.

His ghostly admonition consisted largely in this word of his very own: "Minimize the difficulties." This was simple, and for a time, at least, seemed sufficient. His forbear, the Rector of Fareham, in Elizabeth's time, could have used no surer touch of finality.

In exchange for consolation and present help in time of trouble he thought it fair to elicit from elderly persons a store of antiquarian and genealogical fact; so that it was hard to determine

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just where the priest left off and the local historian began. The greatest compliment he ever received was, he thought, the one given by an old farmer at the roadside, "I swan! Professor, you can haul the innards out of a feller quicker 'n any man I ever seen!"

Occasionally we would stop at the poorhouse on our homeward drive to conduct a simple burial service. For years and years every pauper considered it his or her right to have "their funeral preached" by Professor Perry. For he was very wonderful in this office; tender, understanding, human. They all knew this, and it lent a grace to death. For a very gifted man, he was probably the least of an intellectual snob that ever lived in the world.

But there were moments when even he found it difficult to "minimize the difficulties." There was the occasion when a poor woman, whose delinquencies were not fully outlined to a boy, lay in her coffin and Father spoke as follows:

"Dear neighbors and friends, our sister has

departed to a better world. There is not a great deal we are entitled to say about her life, but this much at least may be told (he then brightened up considerably, for the antiquarian was coming to the top): it was her great-great-grandmother who brought the first rag carpet to Williamstown ! ”

And so we wended our way homeward past the rich meadows deep in June, through quiet roadways overhung by elm and maple, past the spot where the gypsies always camped, along the Green River with its swimming-holes, till our house came into sight — the big, square, comfortable house that stood up alone, out in the singing fields.

“Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright
The bridal of the earth and sky.”

Then up the gravel incline, through the wide door of the carriage-house ; one last, wild, demon plunge by Chevalier, Son of Satan ; an ominous, horrible lurch of the blue-lined carry-all, and the great ark came to rest.

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I wonder what has ever become of that ancient chariot? To me it was a gilded regal coach. And why not? For it carried on royal progress up and down New England roads a veritable King among Men.

CHAPTER III

GOING TO COMMENCEMENT

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I

WHEN the snow was off the mountains, and the mud was off the roads, and the new grass had grown tall enough to wave in the wind, and the lilacs had bent down fragrantly over Walden's Spring, and the bats came in the twilight, and fireflies, and the sound of college singing as you tumbled into bed in the dark — every boy in town would put this question to his pal or write it shyly on his slate: "Are you going to Commencement?" An engagement to preclude this no one could have; that was well known — for none of us ever went away in summer-time.

Oh! wonderful question, utterly superfluous, yet asked in utmost soberness; not for information, but for utterance, for the glory of the word, for the sheer mystical joy of the thing!

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“Are you going to Commencement?”

For Commencement had a meaning. It meant a brass band all the way from Boston, a band clangorous and martial, in magnificent uniforms with gold braid. There was a boy in my school, a fine boy except for his pride, at whose house the leader of the band boarded all during the three days' engagement.

It meant that the Governor of the Commonwealth was coming to Williamstown; and the Sheriff of the County of Berkshire, with bell crown and cockade, in buff waistcoat, carrying a staff. It meant wearing your Sunday suit all day Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday; it meant pretty girls from big cities; pretty girls in stylish dresses, with wonderful parasols — girls who lived in New York.

But they were not going back there till the cool autumn; they were on their way to that wonderful place called “the seashore” that none of us had ever seen; and they talked about going in bathing just the way you would speak

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of going huckleberrying — without blushing a bit! They danced the “German,” whatever that was, and they were laced so tight that you wondered how they could swallow at all, and where all the food went to.

It meant, here and there a grand equipage; spacious victorias with resplendent coachmen and great glistening horses in harness that creaked and squeaked and was covered with gold. I know it was gold; a fellow said so. In those days a lady sitting in her carriage had time to see you coming, and when she bowed to you slowly, with a smile, she dipped her parasol a little, and made a slight forward motion of her thin shoulders. I guess you would call it graciousness or good breeding or something. Oh! I know — you have no need to tell me — I know well enough it was because she loved my mother.

When the train gets in from New York on Monday, Cyrus W. Field will be here. A boy in my school said to me that Cyrus W. Field was

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worth a million dollars; and Toad Parsons, from the Whiteoaks, spit some tobacco juice and said, "Yes! and then you can add another million to that!" And we added it.

Every one was so happy and generous and open! Ah, when the band struck up that wonderful music and you marched along at the side of the road, it nearly tore out your heart to think how badly Napoleon must have felt on that retreat from Moscow. Anyway, Napoleon Bonaparte was the greatest man in the world. Somehow everything seemed open at Commencement time. The doors of the two Museums of Natural History were open all day long. One could go right in. Here were stuffed bears and stuffed birds and a stuffed giraffe; and snakes in great glass jars all drowned in alcohol. "Monk" Raymond, who was older than I — he was almost twelve — said we would better be pretty careful in here, that there was a lot of arsenic around — they stuffed the birds with it.

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Monk was my best friend. As a friend he was always steadfast, but as a philosopher he was sometimes fallible. He was an orphan brought up by a crotchety old grandfather who carried a crooked stick, and a grandmother who, spiritually, was a cross between a crab-apple and the north wind. Monk was staring into a humming-bird's nest. He looked at it a long while, and then remarked—it seemed for no reason at all—"I heard something funny about Jack Perkins the other day."

"What was that, Monk?"

"His mother kisses him every night when he goes off upstairs to bed."

"But—Gosh all hemlocks, Monk!" I began; then, suddenly looking at him, I saw behind the mask. I saw, and I am proud to recall that I lied like a gentleman, and remarked, "Well! that's the darndest piece of foolishness I ever heard of!"

He also asserted, in a whisper, that the janitor had lifted a snake out of one of those glass

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jars and then drank up the alcohol. That seemed to me quite awful; it seemed incredible that in the midst of all these wonderful, wonderful things and with the chance to see them every day, a man could think just about himself, and the delicious pleasure of strong drink.

“But the worst is Wine,” said Monk. “Wine is the worst there is. I drank some once. I took just a sip of Grandmother’s cherry bounce and I reeled like anything.”

“Monk, what do you think is the wickedest thing a fellow can do?”

“Well, murder is pretty wicked,” reflected Monk, “murder and adultery.”

“Do you mean — do you mean having two wives?”

“Yes!” answered he, “and never speaking to either of them; never going near them at all; just neglecting them.”

Depression sat upon both of us. But hark! What’s that? It’s the Band! There goes the Band!

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And out we scurried as fast as our short legs could carry us.

“And so we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the Sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.
And so we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the Sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.”

“Monk, how would you like to be General Sherman, and sit on a hotel piazza in the evening, and smoke a cigar from Havana, and put up your feet onto the railing, and just think and think and remember?”

“Fine!” said Monk; “but Hannibal was the greatest of all — if only those Romans had given him a fair show.”

II

FROM neighboring villages and outlying farms, from Blackinton and Pownal, from Bee Hill and Hemlock Brook, from Whiteoaks and The Hopper and South Part came the rural population to Commencement. The men were dressed in their best black suits and they wore new shoes that squeaked. The advanced industrial

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age in which we now live has eliminated the squeak from shoe-leather. What a lamentable loss! It gave a personal note; it was a veritable annunciation. The women were always dressed in white, and were either excessively spare or else excessively stout. In any case they carried fans. There were palm-leaf fans, and fans that shut up with a click; but all were needful, and all were in action, for the weather was sure to be intolerably hot.

Better judges of oratory, keener critics of forensic discourse, could nowhere have been found than in this assemblage at the village church. This was no peasantry; it was only here and there in the building that one could have sighted a rustic. This was a segment of the Yankee race. Sharp intelligence was here, and abounding humor, and a moral integrity deep-rooted in Calvinism.

Take flight, O Sophomore of the prize contest, take flight into the empyrean if you will; you will fly alone — you shall not take this people

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with you. Storm, bombastic Senator from Washington; they will listen and wonder, but inwardly they will laugh you to scorn. College graduates in very respectable numbers would be found among this farming group; fathers and mothers of college men in greater numbers still. Their daughters were school teachers, and teachers of Sunday Schools, and the whole family read "The Springfield Republican." At many a four corners among syringa bushes rested a plain white house of God; and men of brains, men like my father, used to commune there with these people upon the deep things of life. I repeat: this was no peasantry.

There were further attractions, however, beyond the things of the mind and the spirit. If you began to be wearied by the graduation oratory, and the programme seemed to extend on and on, away to the bottom of the third page, and the intermissions for music by the band appeared too few, and "The Soul of Matthew Arnold" began to get a little blurred in your

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mind, and you grew indifferent to "Bismarck and the Unification of Germany," and you yourself began to feel the contagion of "The Unrest of the Age," and it grew hotter all the time, and the Doctors of Divinity on the platform began to loosen, just a little, their snowy white cravats, and His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, had become suspiciously still — you could steal out of church, with a serious expression, and visit the Merry-go-round.

For Stephen Bacon, proprietor of the Hopper farm — those rich broad acres of meadow and upland overhung by Bald Mountain — used to descend upon the town at Commencement time with his mighty swings and his Merry-go-round. These he installed in open spaces near the college, and what with booths and the rest, the neighborhood would take on the aspect of a county fair. In years far later, when one sat at Bacon's supper-table after a happy day of trout-fishing, he would observe to his guest,

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and to his hired men. "Any one can succeed at farming who uses good energy and good calculation." We know his grandfather had proved this on the very same homestead; his father had proved it in his time; and he himself had proved it throughout a long and prosperous life.

But Nature's harvest out of those generous fields was not his only harvest-time. Commencement and Commencement crowds brought also to him their goodly returns. Yes! it was "good calculation." One cannot forget the patient blue eye and the measured drawl of this sage son of Ceres who dwelt beneath the shadows of Greylock Mountain.

And here at the Merry-go-round would be Abe the Bunter, the very blackest of all blacks. His life had come in with the century, and in boyhood he had escaped from slavery in York State. He had married an Amazon named Elsa, of Indian blood, mingled with that of a Hessian soldier in the army of Burgoyne. Abe

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was afraid of her, but so was every one else; for when she strode down the street, silent and sinister, she was as formidable as a regiment of the Old Prussian Guard. They occupied a cabin in the Whiteoaks by the side of Broad Brook; but if, as Methodist preachers tell us, the French have no word for Home — neither had Abe the Bunter.

Abe in his prime was a most powerful negro, and he performed, not with hands or feet, but with his head, Herculean labors. It happened in this wise. He had a cranium as resistant as armor plate. More than this, at the summit of his forehead was a large protuberant mound, the size of a hen's egg. This African Pan would use his head as a battering-ram, and no dormitory door could sustain the shock. Thus, for the inconsiderable sum of half a dollar, a group of busy undergraduates in a college study could be induced to satisfy their intellectual curiosity and their destructive instincts at the same time. It was mag-

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nificent, and if not war, it bore a close resemblance to it.

This eccentricity of cranium became Abe the Bunter's chief financial resource; it was literally his capital. And when age came on, and caution, and when prowess was relaxed, he still thrived; for in the interest of Science he hypothecated his skull. To no less than a half-dozen different students he had sold his cranium for cash, delivery to be made when the Lord should call him.

Yet the last time I saw him he was in the poorhouse. As I handed him the package of tobacco I had brought for him, he sagely observed, in thanking me, "It has always been worth a great deal to me to be a nigger."

Epictetus, Epictetus! can you equal that?

I sometimes suspect that Abe the Bunter may be destined to greater fame than any of the gifted sons of Williams or of Williamstown. It may be that ages hence, when the Hoosac shall have overrun its banks, even as

the Alpheios engulfed Olympia, Macaulay's traveler from New Zealand, with an Anthropologist in his company, may unearth the skull of the gallant Abe.

"Here was a Nordic," the Anthropologist will affirm; "a direct ancestor of the blue-eyed, blond-haired Nordic race."

And the Williamstown Man, *Homo Bunterius*, shall take a place in the ringing halls of Science even as the Neanderthal Man, the Rhodesian Man, and the Man of Piltdown.

But why that group of gleeful listeners surrounding the person with the wheelbarrow? They are gulping down the oratory of the redoubtable Bill Pratt. For this is Bill himself; Bill, with his sawbuck and his saw; Bill, who took no holidays, but was himself a holiday; Bill, who was the joy of college boys throughout more than sixty years; Bill, who claimed membership in my grandfather's class, in my father's class, and in my class. A sturdy, muscular man and grave, he can neither read nor

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write. He is wearing several pairs of trousers and half a dozen shirts ; and his sleeves are rolled up at the elbow. Winter and summer this is his garb. He is not only clothed, but clothed upon. His diet, never varied, consists of crackers and cheese and hard cider. To feed his body he sawed wood, but to satisfy his soul he made orations. To the layman they were sound and fury signifying nothing ; but to the poet, the artist, the mystic, they were joy and bliss ineffable.

Years ago when I was a small boy, my mother used to go on pilgrimage with me, one day in spring, one day in autumn, to buy for me clothes against the coming season.

Not Damascus, hardly Athens, certainly not Rome, has stirred my pulses as did, in those great days, the Main Street of North Adams. On a corner of this street stood a wonderful store, and behind the counter a wonderful man whose voice was very quiet and whose manners were the gentlest in the world. And from the lips of

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Henry Savage, when the garments had been chosen, these long awaited words would fall: "We should like to present to the young man either a necktie or a pair of suspenders."

The Valley of Decision! The boy would walk to the front door, and look out upon the tumultuous roaring life of the world of men. After all I have found no more vital question. Here lies the whole problem of Art and Morality. Dear Reader, have I taken too long to tell you that the oratory of Bill Pratt was of the necktie rather than of the suspender order? It was for ornament, rather than for moral uplift.

Art thou an impressionist? Listen! This was taken down in short-hand:

"Gentlemen of the noble conjugation! Sanctified embodiments of the dust of Earth! I greet you with the testiments of munification, humanity, proserpy, and destruction. By the efforts of my shad-glooms of death, by the fables of conjuity and the vance of dormant worship, I select myself. I elevate myself on prosperity

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and tain and parmenity and generosity to the gable end of Christianity. Arise! the Tain of Progress. Hear us, Sakes of Life and Glooms of Death. On the fancy verge of egotism, may the whale gates of parmenity transform my elevation, and concess my headways of bluce in the ornaments of munition and the tain of gollidge.

“Transform my own sanctity in the ballads of life, and purified by the rich views of the dust of earth strike the Shakespeares of the gable end. Proserpize the glooms of the infesimal destruction. Fountain of Headways, and Charge of the glooms of earth, by the verb defections of parmenity, mangelism, resurrection and redemption, Hail to the Dust of Earth! Spit of the half-ways, ornaments of publicity, vance of worship and tain of progress, concess myself with all-spice and rang-gang to the gable-end of the cartridge box, to the inguinity of the brainless hymoniky the concessive tweed-shell, and the Shakespearean spit-fire.

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“ Oh! for the whale gates of Sanctity, the testiments of gollidge and glooms. May the shoulder blades of Time and the inguinity of Purification consume us!

“ Sakes of Life and Fountain of all Headways transform us by the ornaments of testimonial pardonation to the Shad-Glooms of Eternity!”

This, of course, in the realm of Thought is pure mysticism; and in the realm of Sense, what Music, what Music it was!

And what shall I more say? For time would fail me to tell of Sugar Billy, of Aaron Blue—that Merlin of the Whiteoaks who peddled the gleaming sea-sand—of Sabriny Beebe, of Mandy Crum, of Josh Maynard—who looked like Lord Palmerston dug up from a barnyard—of old Doctor Porter, the suave Ethiopian who could set your bones if that was your desire; and of that strange apparition, Lon Leet of Moon Hollow.

At this June season our house would be filled

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with guests; the more crowded it was, the happier was my mother, the smile upon whose lips in every season no poet could describe. Her graciousness and unfeigned delight in welcoming back some lonely missionary from India or South Africa, home on furlough, put heart into many a good man or woman half dazed by America after years of foreign residence. Ranged about our dinner table sat college classmates of my father, the men of '52.

I wonder how clearly I can recall Henry Hazeltine? By Saturday noon the Reverend Henry Hazeltine would climb down out of the stage-coach. He was Father's oldest and dearest friend, and they were members of the same fraternity. Though a gentle, pulmonary soul, he was one of our hardy perennials for the Commencement Season. His voice was very thin, but so was everything else about him, save his ancient carpet-bag which always bulged with spotless linen. He wore low shoes, and white socks, and white cravat, and a white

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linen duster for traveling ; and his Panama hat had been browned by the glare of many Stockbridge summers. His upper lip, perhaps the longest and most solemn in modern history, was clean-shaven; but the rest of his face was covered by a dark red beard. And he had brown eyes of the greatest depth and beauty.

Father claimed that in a "Logic" Examination at the end of their Junior year Henry had beaten him by one point. But the Reverend Henry would never have it so, declaring that he had been beaten by Father. In a friendship lasting for a half a century, this was their only point of disagreement.

Just one other portrait — this of Father's fellow townsman and intimate friend, "Jimmie" Paul. Always at table with us on these high occasions, he must have seemed a puzzle to many of the "Gown." Everybody called him "Jimmie." To old and young, to even the smallest child in town, he was "Jimmie" Paul. This, too, not by reason of affection

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for him, but by reason of a veiled contempt. For "Jimmie" Paul was "queer." There was no society for the prevention of cruelty by children and "Jimmie" was fair game for the silliest and for the most stupid. He was an old bachelor and a hermit. Perhaps no man ever lived among the Berkshire Hills who was so sensitive to natural beauty and who felt so passionate a love for little children. His voice he sent forth in a rhapsody or chant, and as he talked he blinked his eyes. Always he was blinking. As I recall him he resembled the portraits of Thoreau, and he was about one hundred times more interesting.

Some Friday in June, about the time of the wild azalea, he would appear at the schoolhouse and announce that on the following day he would conduct a picnic on East Mountain. At the head of his troop of boys and girls, all carrying their luncheon packages, with here and there a teacher, he would lead us through the woods pointing out sudden beauties hid from the foun-

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dation of the world. He was a poet, worshipping at the Temple's inner shrine; and we pelted him with orange peel.

There at the table, also, would be college presidents, and teachers from the Middle West or the Pacific States. Stalwarts these who had gone out from our Vale of Beauty to become pioneers of Education on the treeless plains of Nebraska, and on the California coast. Stirred by Father's stimulating interest, each had his tale to tell of small beginnings and discouragements, of valor and success.

There was one magic key never touched at these formal occasions, a note reserved for the intimacy of the family circle, when the Commencement Season should be over. This was my mother's astounding mimicry. The Lord had permitted Mother to be left-handed, the manifest purpose this, that, while pouring tea with her left hand, she might be free to gesture with her right. Nothing rested my father like a demonstration of this kind, though it was a gift

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wholly left out of his own composition. The roaring waves of laughter that rose from him and the six children always disconcerted the Puritan soul of my mother, and to the end of her life she would blush with confusion. Impersonation, with her, was wholly an interior thing; it needed only a wave of the hand, the raising of an eyebrow, a twitch of her mobile lips, and she could achieve perfectly, in a fraction of a second, what a blunderer would take five minutes to do, and fail in doing. Oh! ye holy, but not humble, men of heart who sat in amplitude of white waistcoat on the Commencement stage, you never, never, knew! Just a moment's quick posture, a trick of the voice, and the bland gods of the platform became deflated for us forever!

The chief social lions of our household at Commencement time were the Adventurers of the Cross; that gifted family from Syria; that immensely tall, athletic man who carried on his forehead the great scar from the scimitar of a Kurdish bandit in the mountains of Armenia;

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that vigorous missionary from Southern India who took me for companion on a lonely walk one day in the high pastures, and remarked, as he lighted his cigar before vaulting the rail fence, "I would as soon expect to convert the Devil in Hell as to convert a Hindoo of the Brahmin caste." How entertaining, after a day or two, they all became! What stories they told! And how they dreaded the thought of being parted, by the width of the world, from their growing children!

Yes! these were our social lions, and how unfashionable they were! Looking back at these various types they seem the most unworldly group of people ever drawn beneath a single roof; and, within somewhat narrow limits, the best educated lot. But this present world they knew better than most, for they were workers in it. They had been bred to its enlightenment, and dedicated to its healing.

CHAPTER IV

THE CLIMATE OF THE FIFTIES

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THUS among the learned the Substance of things hoped for passed off into Notions, and for the unlearned the Surfaces of things became Substance. The Christian world was for centuries divided into the Many that did not think at all, and the Few that did nothing but think — both alike unreflecting, the one from defect of the act, the other from absence of an object.” Thus Samuel Taylor Coleridge in “Aids to Reflection.”

Four volumes of a Journal recently discovered by my sister disclose the intimate life of my father for a little more than the decade beginning with 1850. Starting in Father’s twentieth year, it continues till after his marriage and the birth of his three older children. It is written in a script fine as engraving, but whose

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form, as one might expect, was individual throughout.

It is pleasanter to look at, however, than to peruse. To read it is to trudge through the burning sands of Sahara with bare feet. The intense individualism of the religious thinking of the time, the extreme evangelicalism with its hotness and coldness, the constant jumping up to study one's spiritual thermometer, the heart-searchings, despairs, and exaltations, the barometric pressures betokening the coming of "revivals," like the onset of thunder-storms — all this makes one groan to reflect how long delayed, for New England, was the advent of Horace Bushnell. Moreover, one turns back again and again to that glowing and beautiful page wherein Father notes that "Pitkin treated the class to beer."

The climate of the fifties was theological, with a vengeance, and for the most part these pages of the Journal are the record of morning sermons, and noon prayer-meetings, and night

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conferences on the subject of religion. But now and then Nature breaks through, as when Father observes, in the midst of a great revival, "I don't feel quite right, but I thank God I can feel at all!"

These youths, with their elders, were so absorbed in the Nature of God that they had no time, or very little, for the real nature of man, and the nature of man's world. They would sweat blood in their quest of Reality; but they were enabled to touch only the hem of Truth's seamless robe. The transformation of New England religion came with the rediscovery of the Child; with the reappearance of the Family; with the redisclosure of religion as a part, and not the whole, of organic life. It was a thorough house-cleaning, for fragrant new grass, wet with dew, was strewn on the dusty carpets.

Thus it happened that after Father's marriage to my mother, after the coming of little children into his life, and the new force of the

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big fact of Family, and after spiritual things had begun to take on an organic look, golden silences suddenly enrich the Journal, the awful burden falls from off his back, and he comes unto his living soul; a soul full of joy and peace and security, full of humor and fun and boisterousness, full of energy and action.

“A laugh, a cry, the business of the world,
And my whole soul revolves, the cup runs over.”

It would be unjust, however, to survey that desert without observing that the disciplines of the spirit endured at Williams College in the fifties did give keenness to the powers of the mind, did put conscience into its right place of dominance, did beget a sense of social vocation.

Moreover, one may find an oasis here and there in the Journal, an oasis with a well. A few clumps of verdure there are where the life seems almost human, with naturalness, boyishness, and simplicity.

If the reader cares for a stroll, I promise him

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a palm tree or two beneath which we may spread
a midday meal, plain, homely, and wholesome.

29 *March*, 1850. '

“Reviewed the *Electra* of Sophocles, and
commenced the reading of Macaulay’s *History*
of England. Attended President Hopkins’ lec-
ture.”

One may note in this first fragment of his
Journal three types of interest, three leadings of
educational ambition within the mind of a young
and eager lad. The entry also gives one a
glimpse of the kind of culture offered by Wil-
liams College in the decade between 1850 and
1860. First, the “*Electra*” of Sophocles sug-
gests the insistence upon sound classical train-
ing, the formation of taste, the presentation
through art of noble dramatic ideas springing
from master minds of the world. No youth in
those days might receive his “sheepskin”
ignorant of the Greek Alphabet. He was sure

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to have suffered an insinuating suspicion that somehow his world was “connected up” with Athens, and he could not help receiving hints that the English language is but a sort of poor relation to the tongue of richly dowered Greece.

Secondly, the private reading of Macaulay’s History prefigured for my father the form of social studies to which he was to devote his life.

Thirdly, the hour with Mark Hopkins in the serious contemplation of the highest intellectual themes, with the consequent awakening of mind, will, and moral purpose through stimulation by a great personality, reveals what a supreme inducement there was to grasp hold of things real and fundamental. Add to all this an intense and general passion for the art of public speaking — a passion subsided long since — and one sees the engrossing interest of the time. Classical training, historical studies, philosophical unfolding; a fair discipline, was it not? /

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19 *April*, 1850.

“It is seventy-five years ago to-day that the first blood of the American Revolution was spilt. It is the anniversary of the Battle of Lexington. We in quietness are reaping the fruits of our fathers’ toil and patriotism. Was examined in Theocritus this morning.”

22 *April*, 1850.

“This has been ‘Chip Day,’ one of the peculiar features of Old Williams. The last Monday of the Spring term has been set apart from time immemorial for clearing up the yards and for setting out trees.”

10 *May*, 1850.

“Wrote my cousin Leonard trying to defend Daniel Webster as well as I could. I am sorry Webster has said and done just what he has; but I am not ready to impeach his motives and his patriotism.”

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29 *May*, 1850.

“Students have come in this afternoon by stage-loads. The streets so deserted during vacation present a busy appearance. Glad to see friends again ; it is a great part of the *Poetry* of going to college. We feel the force of the common tie.”

17 *July*, 1850.

“John Bascom came down this evening from Hoosick Falls. We shall probably not see him very soon again, if ever. He is expecting to study law. A man of very fine talents. He will prove a useful and upright lawyer.”

26 *July*, 1850.

“Beside ordinary college duties I have read two or three lectures of Professor Finney of Oberlin on ‘Natural and Moral Ability and Inability.’ He takes a different view of the Will from Jonathan Edwards whom he makes to teach absurdities and nonsense. He thinks man

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is able to obey God fully, because obedience is nothing but willing. I cannot find any flaw in his reasoning, but I will examine further before I give my full assent or dissent."

31 *July*, 1850.

"Batchelder and Charley came in and we read a few hundred lines of Sophocles. Charley soon went to sleep upon the bed. I love the Greek language but I shall not be as good a linguist as I expected to be."

1 *August*, 1850.

"How like a dream has the time past since two years ago when I entered the stage before my mother's door at midnight, and started for Williamstown. My tastes have changed, habits of study, modes of thought. I have a greater desire to know and a less desire to *appear* to know. I am well aware, however, that there is too much of the latter feeling left."

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8 *August*, 1850.

“Took a ramble this morning on Stone Hill. Spent most of the forenoon there with Whipple and Charley, regaling ourselves with whortleberries and blueberries.”

15 *August*, 1850.

“As I was coming out of prayers this evening Dr. Alden wished to speak with me a moment. He offered to assist me in my college course. He said he would pay my present indebtedness (about \$25) and help me in the future. Such kindness from a stranger almost unmans me. How little did I dream of Professor Alden’s taking an interest in me! Yet he offers to help me from his own purse and to interest another in my behalf. Afterward he introduced me to a Mr. Converse of New York who desires to assist me with funds.”

If the reader will indulge me, I should like to halt him for a moment while I pay my grate-

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ful respect to this gentle Professor Alden, and to "a Mr. Converse of New York."

The salary of a Williams professor in those days was a pitiful sum, and to have made a gift of twenty-five dollars to this poor country boy (whose mother had been left a widow with four children to educate) was a very beautiful act of self-denial. Your hand, Sir, across the years!

And who were you, Mr. Converse of New York? I do not know. But I like your name. From a full heart I thank you. And you never, perhaps, made a better investment.

19 *August*, 1850.

"Part of the day engaged in preparing the Bier for the solemnities of "burying Euclid." About ten o'clock the class, disguised, assembled for the ceremonies. Figures grotesque. Clarke with a cone cap four feet high; Batchelder with a parallelopiped; Parsons with an oblique prism. A song composed by Whipple

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was sung to the tune of 'Old Susanna.' In torchlight procession we marched to Stone Hill, singing as we went. Dickinson pronounced the funeral oration, and Euclid was buried "

Any one who has experienced the fall rains among the Berkshire Hills, the soggianness of the rotting leaves, the sense of damp desolation, the suspicion of having been forgotten by mankind, nay, the very certainty of it, will recognize the boy's grayness of soul in the next. But Oh! the resilience of Youth! Mark the latter half.

28 *October*, 1850.

"The appearance of Nature just now is rather somber. The leaves are fallen and the wind sounds solemn. I am growing older (he had now reached the ripe age of twenty) and my habits are becoming fixed. May religion be the main element in my character. Wisdom

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is the principal thing, therefore get Wisdom.

“*Later.* Received an invitation from the young ladies to become one of ‘The Sociables,’ so called. I shall attend the next evening, and see how it affects me. I *may* attend regularly.”

1 *November*, 1850.

“Have felt rather dull to-day in consequence of being out late last night. I don’t know about these ‘Sociables.’ A very pleasant day to-day, and I have been happy, though not very clear in mind.”

4 *November*, 1850.

“The chief thing to-day, the bolting of our recitation-room door against Professor Griffin. After ineffectual attempts to ‘boot it through’ he descended the stairs, and asked Hazeltine and Charley to get him a billet of wood. They hesitated and finally declined. The outside

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door was then closed against him, but he managed to get his stick inserted, and so caught hold of Dave Jewett, whom he recognized. Poor Dave! I fear he will be rusticated.”

21 *May*, 1851.

“Went up to Sand Springs this afternoon with Jordan Less for a swim. He is quite melancholy in consequence of a letter he has just received from a young lady with whom he was formerly intimate, disclosing a depth of feeling which he had no reason to suppose existed.”

This is sad reading. In my boyhood I often saw at our house the Reverend Jordan Less, Doctor of Divinity. He stood about six feet, three inches in height, wore a square gray beard, and had been for many years a religious leader on the Pacific Coast. Time had done much for him. He had, so far as appearances indicated, wholly recovered from his melan-

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choly of that day in May, 1851. Exactly what degree of responsibility rested upon him for the "depth of feeling he had no reason to suppose existed," it is probably too late to determine. But the subject attracts me. And some men are very strange. I am confident of this, however. He could not have chosen a better companion for that walk through delicious pines, and that swim of a May afternoon. For Father's counsel was sure to have been that favorite word of his, "Minimize the difficulties!"

29 *May*, 1851.

"The term began to-day; our first recitation in Astronomy. Began Chemistry also under Professor Lasell. In German we are to have instruction under *Mrs.* Albert Hopkins."

28 *June*, 1851.

"Attended President Hopkins' lecture this morning. He said he remembered, when a boy,

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finding a man lying by a fence in evident distress. People soon gathered round him and asked what was the matter? The man replied, 'I have taken opium enough to kill me.' 'What for?' said they. 'Why,' said he, 'I am a Universalist, and am tired of life.' They took him to a public house, and endeavored to give him an emetic. He refused to take it, and they were obliged to knock out his teeth and force it down him."

Where else but in New England could this tragi-comic scene have been enacted? Contemplate, if you please, the wonderful lad Mark Hopkins, alongside the Stockbridge fence, staring wide-eyed at the prostrate Universalist who seemed tolerant of self-slaughter, but opposed on conscientious grounds to emetic; the firm solemnity of the Orthodox; and the poor heretic henceforth enfeebled for the gnashing of teeth!

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1 *July*, 1851.

“As Henry and I were at prayer this evening George Moar rapped at the door. When we admitted him he said that Crapo and Gilman of Yale had come for the purpose of initiation. After arranging the preliminaries we went up to our rooms and about 12 o'clock we were declared to be regular members of Alpha Delta Phi.”

The foregoing is noteworthy. An invitation from this amiable brotherhood has frequently taken men off their feet; but I venture to question whether on any occasion since July, 1851, it has taken men off their knees.

24 *August*, 1851.

“Lewis explained to me to-day his idea of Perpetual Motion. By means of magnets, the long desideratum he thinks can be supplied. His plan is theoretically correct, but I apprehend insuperable practical difficulties.”

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23 *October*, 1851.

“A menagerie exhibition at North Adams this afternoon had attractions for the class superior to our first lesson in Dugald Stewart’s *Philosophy of the Mind*.”

1 *December*, 1851.

“Professor Albert Hopkins preached to-day. Seldom have I heard such an impressive sermon. His text was ‘The King, eternal, immortal, invisible.’ The main point was, that the attribute of invisibility was no evidence against the reality and potency of Power. All great forces of Nature are invisible. Gravitation is invisible, but a reality. All efficient causes are invisible. God is invisible.”

1 *January*, 1852.

“Have just finished ‘*Nicholas Nickleby*.’ To tell the truth it is my first introduction to Dickens, having had a sort of prejudice against him for his plain dealing with our country after

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his visit here. But I am indebted to him for many pleasant hours, and for no small addition to my knowledge of human nature.”

After graduation in 1852 Father entered upon school-teaching in Washington, D.C.

24 *October*, 1852, Washington.

“The news came this morning that Daniel Webster is dead. It was his more than once to speak the word that calmed the people, that brought back confidence and peace, that saved the Nation. Gone, a great shadow is thrown over these streets. I have felt very solemn over the death of this great man. God speaks to the Nation in this event. He says to the politicians who are so earnest about the approaching elections ‘Love not the World nor the things that are in the World.’ ”

1 *December*, 1852, Washington.

“After my school to-day I took President

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Hopkins' Baccalaureate Sermon, *our* Baccalaureate, and went out into the fields to my favorite place and read it. I was stirred by it to the very soul. Dr. Hopkins is a *Princely Mind*. He has benefited me more than all other minds combined. I esteem it the great privilege of my life to have been under his instruction. An inference I draw from the effect his sermons have upon me is that the best way to move the feelings is through the Reason. Nothing is so intellectual, so logical as his trains of thought, yet nothing moves me to such a pitch of feeling."

1 *January*, New Year's Day, 1853, Washington.

"A most interesting call upon old Mrs. Hamilton, widow of Alexander Hamilton, perhaps the most prominent actor in the formation of our Government, who met his death in a duel with Aaron Burr. She is now ninety-four years old, active in body, clear in mind. She talks fa-

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miliarly of Washington, Jefferson and the Fathers. I told her how greatly I was interested in her on account of her husband's connection with the Government. 'He *made* your Government!' said she; 'he made your Bank. I sat up all night with him to help him do it. Jefferson thought we ought not to have a Bank, and President Washington thought so. But my husband said, "We must have a Bank." I sat up all night, copied out his writing, and the next morning he carried it to President Washington, and we had a Bank.' Her daughter interrupted the conversation at this point by saying, 'We 'll have some punch and wine.' The old lady, getting up, took hold of my hand and said, 'So we will!' but the daughter would not permit her — to my vexation."

30 *May*, 1853, Washington.

"Received a letter this morning from President Hopkins which decides definitely that I go back to Williams as Tutor. The President

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hints strongly of a Professorship! It all seems strange to me.”

3 *June*, 1853, Washington.

“For inflammatory rheumatism take half an ounce of pulverized salt-petre; mix it with half a pint of sweet oil, and bathe the parts affected.”

With characteristic method Father set down in opposite columns the reasons for, and the reasons against, going to Williams as Tutor. The score stands seven to two in favor of Williams. One of the reasons against acceptance of the offer was as follows: “I shall in all probability subject myself to a great deal of annoyance and anxiety. A Tutor, as such, is not greatly respected by students. They find innumerable ways to annoy him. *They lock him in.* They love to play tricks upon him. They will scrape and groan in recitation. They will disturb his slumbers by nocturnal howlings,

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and by rolling stoves down the stairs. This is not pleasant. He will treat them all politely, yet some of them will insult him. He must bear it, and put a good face upon it, though he smart inwardly. If it is known that he is in love with a young lady in the village *they will write her name upon the black-board!* And all this would have to be borne with the wisdom of a Philosopher and the spirit of a Martyr.”

CHAPTER V

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

CHAPTER V

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

IN my mother's room, where all seven of us were born, stood a certain bureau with a little drawer in the upper right-hand corner. To us children this drawer was a kind of sanctuary, for therein lay a little pasteboard box with the printed legend, "Brown's Bronchial Troches."

But Brown's Bronchial Troches were not what fired the boyish imagination. It was the two sacred objects, not germane to medicine, reposing in the box.

The first was a red ticket denoting life membership in the Hoosac Valley Fair. No individual and non-transferable privilege, this. It was a Family ticket and for Life. In the last week of September, every year, we hitched up "Cobden" or "Chevalier" to the blue-lined

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carry-all and started eastward for the Cattle Show. On these occasions the term "Family" was given its broadest possible interpretation; its content was equivalent to the capacity of the chariot.

In addition to the sons of the household, properly so called, we packed in Billy Cooper, naturally; then Cholly Spooner, and Cholly McCoon, and Monk Raymond, and the Ethiopian Amos Jackson who looked like a gorilla, having long black arms that reached below his knees.

It was always a fine point of casuistry — during the rest of the year — whether, as we plunged past the gate-keeper at the Fair Grounds and flashed our red ticket before his eyes, we were really justified in shouting, as we always did, "We're Professor Perry's boys and he's a Life Member!" My brother Walter has never had, to this day, a doubt upon the subject. "We" meant "We Perrys." But he is a business man.

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The second sacred object, if less catholic in scope, less utilitarian in character, than the red ticket, wielded a fascination even stronger. As you took the box into your careful hand and shook it, there came mysteriously forth a muffled, rolling, thumping sound, as of a tired marble, only heavier; as of a wearied glass alley, but weightier even than that. What was it? I will tell you.

It was the musket-ball from the battle-field of Waterloo! O leaden sphere, grander to me than Arcturus or planet Mercury! O lethal globe, that flew past the Sunken Road, that sang over the Farm of Hougomont, that grazed, mayhap, the gallant uniform of Marshal Ney, that glanced from an Old Guard helmet, and fell at the very feet, perchance, of the Mighty Corsican!

One might not gaze at it too steadily; it looked grave as human destiny. One might not balance it in the palm for long; it grew heavy with the weight of all this unintelligible world.

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How *could* such a great and good man be left to die — on a lonely isle like Saint Helena?

Years afterward, as I sauntered one day among the stacks of grain that stood in companies upon those far-famed acres of Waterloo, vainly seeking to elude a professional guide who had spotted me when I bought my railway ticket in the station of Brussels, a devastating thought assaulted me like grape-shot. It was this: The really important thing to know is, not who *picked up* that bullet, but who *dropped it!!* Might it possibly have happened that some one — the uncle, for instance, of this perspiring Belgian, while Father's back was turned — But no! a thousand times, no! I will not think it! I will abide in my father's faith, and cling for dear life to that pasteboard box marked "Brown's Bronchial Troches."

Notwithstanding all this, one of the little ironies of our boyhood was that Father would never permit us to read Walter Scott. The incurableromanticism of this gentleman was held

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in our household to be a pernicious influence. He painted, it seemed, a world that never was, and Father did not propose that our minds should get warped on the subject of the British Constitution. Doubtless, in its own humble way, the British Constitution has done much for us all ; but how I should have loved the Waverley Novels, and going with Rob Roy — while the going was good.

It was of the greatest importance that we be possessed of correct views ; and many a time would my good father halt the table conversation and order all gustatory process suspended while he carved before our very eyes such impostors as dogmatic theologians, socialists, free silverites, and candidates for The Iron Stag. Perhaps it is not possible to assimilate social truths as instantaneously as he expected us to do ; but it was wonderful talk, not wanting in calories, nor deficient in finality.

When Father as a prospective Freshman emerged from the Deerfield stage-coach at the

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village of Williamstown, an August evening in 1848, little enough did he know that this valley was to be his abiding-place for sixty years of happy life; that he was to marry here a girl of extraordinary native charm; that he was to become a loved and honored professor in the college of his choice; that he was to achieve distinction as a student, thinker, and writer in the field of economics; that his works were to be the subject of discussion and of controversy throughout the United States and Europe, and his words translated for the use of scholars in Japan.

Here he was to find his calling; here, too, his avocation. For he had an avocation the most delightful, the most useful in the world — Local History.

No one, perhaps, has ever loved more deeply the home of his adoption. This much is certain. No one has had so ordered, so intelligent, so enthusiastic a grasp of the colonial history of Western Massachusetts. If one

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leaves out of reckoning the various summer vacations spent in Kansas and Nebraska campaigning, at his own expense, for Tariff Reform, one may say that all holidays were given to Local History. To this he devoted all his leisure in the course of sixty years. His rambles among the hills, his horseback rides along the mountain ridges, his journeys to Boston to search the archives at the State House, or to consult with the great Francis Parkman, his interviews with aged farmers as they rested on their scythes in the meadows, or sat by their kitchen stoves on winter afternoons, all had this aim and purpose — to disclose the region's record ; bringing to life again Indian migration, colonial settlement, French occupations, Revolutionary stirrings and conflicts.

That it should have been he who was to feel this historical interest so keenly was well-nigh inevitable. It was in strict accord with the nature of his mind. His admirable, laborious, and unique work in this field was the direct product

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of the temper of the man. For the temper of the man was neither philosophical nor scientific. It was creative, imaginative, humanistic.

Notwithstanding his dominant economic interest, he was no believer in the Marxian doctrine of a purely economic basis for History. He himself was a person, a real person, and a very interesting embodiment of personality. His mind was sensitive to the intellectual, religious, and spiritual currents of past epochs, and he was competent in measuring the force of a given tide or temper.

In part, also, his interest in our local history was attributable to another altogether characteristic reason. In marrying my mother he had taken unto himself her ancestry as well; and nothing is truer of the man than his enthusiastic vicarious interest in the Revolutionary stock from which she sprang.

The doughty Colonel Benjamin Simonds with his regiment of Berkshire men at the Battle of Bennington, and Captain Nehemiah

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Smedley with his company were great-great-grandfathers of us children. Under these two officers in the famous battle had fought nearly the entire able-bodied male population of Williamstown. The old Colonel's portrait, with the three-cornered hat, the large humorous eyes, and the great square jaw, confronts me as I write. It was only the vigorous protest of my mother that prevented Father from handicapping his youngest child with the cacophonous, but honorable name of "Simonds."

This Indian fighter in his youth had stood sentry along the stockade of Fort Massachusetts, erected four miles to the East of us in 1745, and keeping watch and ward against savages and French. Three years after his marriage, with a view to marking the site of this ancient frontier fort, and doubtless with the old Colonel in his mind, my father planted the noble elm that now gives grace and beauty to this historic meadow.

The northernmost of the old chain of forts

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that guarded the western frontier of the colony was Fort Shirley in the hill town of Heath. Father was familiar with all the dimensions of this fort, having studied to advantage ancient muster-rolls and carpenters' plans then yellowed by a century and a half's repose in official archives. His great desire was to determine the exact site of this important strategic outpost. I shall never forget the hot August afternoon when he took me with him on pilgrimage to that almost abandoned township. The Stream of History, so far as it then concerned the boy, had swirled chiefly around the campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte; and I was opposed, at all times, to heat and to mosquitoes. But of these two latter evils Father was, throughout his days, utterly, and I might say, exasperatingly, oblivious. First, we must get "the lay of the land," a lifelong expression with Father, and we took the owner of the farm in question with us. His name was Orsamus Maxwell; but apart from his Christian name we got very little inspiration

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from the worthy Orsamus. I have said it was very hot, and our shovels and pick-axes grew heavy and cumbersome. It was a high pasture and as humpy as possible. Nothing military here, offensive or defensive; all pastures were humpy, and that long-reaching mound was nothing but the trace of a former stone wall.

But the boy guessed wrong; for as Father began to dig, plying vigorously pick-axe and shovel, he struck his iron chest of doubloons — he struck *an oak post of the Stockade of Shirley!*

After one hundred and forty-one years in the ground, it had been dragged up triumphantly into the light; and the happiness of my good father was complete. Long past are the Old French Wars; yet, always, the name of the Marquis de Vaudreuil brings back our high pasture of Heath.

For years my father had sat in conference with the Governors of New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts, and many lesser dignitaries, to determine what suitable memorial

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should be erected to the colonists who had fought at Bennington. He had contended from the outset that this memorial ought to take the form of a lofty monument of native dolomite to express the majestic spirit of those men and their devotion to Anglo-Saxon liberty. When at last the day of final judgment came, in the matter of artistic plan, it seemed a foregone conclusion that not this type of memorial at all, but a group of classical design would be adopted.

Then Father, having walked for an hour the country roads — he always paced up and down when composing — threw himself body and soul into the conflict and turned defeat into victory. Never was better illustration of the power of a single satiric phrase. This he said was a “squat” design; no “squat” design would do.

He closed a half-hour’s speech by summoning the ghosts of the venerated men, the farmers who had fought and won this famous battle in their shirt-sleeves. He pictured them stand-

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ing bewildered before the proposed classical group, and saying to one another, “*Who was this Minervy?*”

It is not irreverent to say that the great obelisk now towering over three hundred feet, and beneath the shadow of Mount Anthony, is, in a very humble degree, a monument also to the patriotism and the common sense of Arthur Latham Perry.

Apart from the moral force of my father's influence as a teacher, there are three outward and visible signs of his service to the world; the large, rich volumes of his local history, the graceful elm that bears his name, and the giant structure on the famous battle-field.

And the meaning of them all is the same. It is summed up in the line of Schiller, the favorite poet of my father's youth — an altered line that Father left to be inscribed upon his own gravestone in the peaceful college burying-ground —

“Wir haben gelebt und geliebet.”

CHAPTER VI
CAPTAIN GOOD HOPE

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CAPTAIN GOOD HOPE

“O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force
Surely has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar
In the sounding labour house vast
Of being, is practised that strength
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

.
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.”

ARNOLD: *Rugby Chapel*

ONE of the familiar and recurrent scenes of my early boyhood was the arrival of the Freshmen at our house to interview Father about the allotment of dormitory rooms. This happened regularly for years in the opening days of warm September, and it was occasion for keenest interest and excitement on the part of the children of the household. For to us, going

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to college was the greatest event in human life; nothing could be compared with it for adventure and romance. It was utterly impossible to conceive how any intelligent being could prefer another course of life to the four wonderful years of college. Not to go meant to be branded as a failure at the start.

It meant carrying in your breast a lifelong sorrow and regret. It meant that you would never have any friends — not real friends, that is — and that even if you did go into business and make a lot of money, you would n't have any mind with which to enjoy your success. That was the point — you would n't have any *mind* left, so what was the use?

I suppose there never was a more provincial set of children than the boys and girls who grew up in Faculty homes of the small New England colleges. Perhaps, nevertheless, an institution that was able, through the years, to impose such a fiction as I have portrayed, has a good deal to claim for itself. Then, too, there was no col-

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lege in the world so fine as Williams; and chiefly because there was no town in the world as beautiful as Williamstown. That is what people said to us, year after year, and how could we escape the belief? Yes, it was beyond question the fairest, the most notable spot upon the earth. I myself saw it was finer than other Berkshire villages, and I could take the rest for granted. Besides, I heard a man say that he had crossed the Atlantic Ocean, over and back, and there was nothing among the Alps that—but, dear reader, I spare you!

And so these were the fortunate youths of the world. To be sure, they might be a little short of furniture—it was expensive to travel from Oregon, let us say—and in such case there would happen a vast rummaging in our attic from which my dear mother and father would emerge with all sorts of serviceable, nondescript stuff—mattresses, bedsteads, wash-bowls, and the like. Then “Cobden” or “Chevalier” would be harnessed to the lum-

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ber-wagon and Father would drive the swaying load to the dormitory, the Freshman managing manfully the problem of equilibrium. It used always to remind me of a picture in my blue-and-gold scrap-book, "The Russian People Fleeing Before Napoleon."

At the beginning of the fall term a damp odor always struck you in these dormitory halls, and the smell of fresh wall-paper, and the delicious, ungodly aroma of cigarettes, and names on the doors in process already of becoming myths.

It was Father's duty not only to allot the rooms, but the room-mates as well. Boys from opposite ends of the earth would be fatefully placed together in accord with some esoteric knowledge of human nature possessed by my father. Down their names would go together in the little old red book, and in scores of cases, down their names have gone together through the world. If some matches have been made in Heaven, many enduring manly friendships

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have been made in my father's study by a mere stroke of his pen in that doomsday book.

"What is your name, if you please, and how do you spell it?" Thus and thus. "Oh! but that's a wrong spelling! This name of yours is an old Huguenot name, and you came originally from Rochelle! However, I'll put you down in 27 West College, with Smith from Washington Territory. You'll get on finely with Smith. His father was in college with me."

So the boy with the Huguenot name that was henceforth to be pronounced by Father just as he thought best, was assigned to Smith from the Pacific Coast because father had liked Smith's father. But was that the real reason? No! it was because my father was an artist in human nature. There were no rules to the game. He simply knew, and that was all.

Comparison is perilous, but I venture this. From the middle of the seventies to the late eighties there was far more individuality in

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the look of the student body than could be observed in later periods. It is not a question of fashion in the matter of dress, for the more that changes the more it 's the same thing. It is a question of personal style, of individual flavor and quality. There was not the uniformity of type that impresses and disappoints one to-day.

At the present time nearly all men in colleges look alike, dress alike, and seem of like age. In that earlier period, at Williams at least, men did not all look alike, nor dress alike, nor talk alike. They came from more widely differing types of homes, possessing more widely differing degrees of prosperity, and the ages of individuals showed greater disparity. While the average age at graduation has not, for a hundred years, varied much from the standard of twenty-two, or thereabout, one used to see many individuals in the student body who were anywhere from twenty-five to thirty years of age.

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These men came to college in black frock-coats such as their ministers wore back in their own country towns. While they were dubbed "hayseeds" by the swells, they were heartily welcomed by the Faculty and made to feel at home. They were serious, sober-minded men who by sheer energy had raised themselves out of the poverty of early surroundings and had come up to Mount Zion to taste the glory of the Lord despite the fact that they were about eight years behind the procession.

The race may not be to the swift, but the battle is generally to the strong, as these men have abundantly shown. "Better to have come and loafed, than never to have come at all," would have seemed rank blasphemy; or rather, it is truer to say that this amiable dictum could have had no meaning for them whatsoever. For to these men four years of life at Williams College raised up visions, held out vistas, as alluring as the glowing fireplaces in the fraternity houses, or flirtations and dances with the charming

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well-bred girls of the gay Commencement Season. Their eyes were fixed on the great professions. They dreamed and plodded and scrimped, often they cooked their own meager meals in their rooms, that one day they might become teachers, clergymen, missionaries; or doctors and lawyers successful enough to rescue a younger brother from the farm and to send him likewise through Williams.

To men of that character, in the midst of that struggle, my father became nothing less than a mighty fortress, or the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He would visit them in their college halls, and set them right about their names or their places; he would bring cheer to them when they lay ill in their narrow bedrooms; he would take them for long walks upon the hills; he would bring them home for dinner at our very simple table, to my mother's constant pleasure. He put heart into them, and hope, and the ineradicable conviction that they could play a winning game.

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Little wonder is it that Father had a deep understanding of the great Wordsworth, who came to be the favorite poet of his later years; Wordsworth "who by the special gift and calling of Almighty God, whether he discoursed of Man or Nature, failed not to lift up the heart to holy things, tired not of maintaining the cause of the poor."

Dear old Father! he was strong, affectionate, and, best of all, demonstrative; yet in a world so far from satisfactory as this, he never once in his life said "Damn." He possessed, nevertheless, a certain gift of articulation which could sometimes achieve the moral equivalent of that dreadful expression. He could pronounce single words, such as "privilege," "plunder," "tariffs," "subterranean," so as to make them sound like positive blasphemy; thus managing, as it were, to enjoy all the benefits of profanity, yet without sinning.

I am loath to close, and I must not, without affording a glimpse into Father's lecture-room;

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for after all is said, my father was first and foremost a Teacher. There were scores of scenes like this in the course of the decades, but this is recorded and described because it is very typical.

It is one of the early days of the fall term. Through open windows blaze the yellow and crimson glories of the maples of the campus. The air is sparkling with vitality. It is good to be alive, it is better to be young, it is best to have comrades. We have just become upper-class men, but that need not worry us, for graduation is two years off. Far to the south stretch the broad meadows, mile upon mile, creeping up to the sloping brown pastures that creep into the wooded sides of the October mountains.

My father is sitting at the side of his desk, a class-book in his left hand, a lead pencil in his right. Before him is his class, a class, always, where *anything* may happen, save somnolence.

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“Gentlemen, this is the root of the matter, here is the whole thing in a nutshell. Buying and selling is exchange of values.” He rises from his chair and walks to the front of the platform, warming to his work. “And what constitutes the basis of value? Nothing is the basis of value, nothing ever was the basis of value, nothing ever can be the basis of value, save human effort, that is, Labor. It is labor that gives life to Buying and Selling; it is labor that creates profitable exchange.

“And what is involved in exchange? Let me tell you. In all exchange whatsoever we observe two desires, two efforts, two satisfactions. This is the meaning of Buying and Selling; and a market for products means products in market. This is the one and only road to prosperity. I ask, is there any other way of obtaining Wealth?”

“Yes, Sir!” shouts a pupil from the middle of the hall.

“Rise and state your case, Mr. Blank.”

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Blank rises and declares there is one other way ; “ I might marry a very rich wife ! ”

Father sits down, throws back his head, slaps his right knee, and explodes with laughter. The class howls with delight. Each man nudges his neighbor and says, “ Bully for Blank ! He ’s got one on Peri ! ”

The Professor rises from his chair again, and with a twinkle in his blue eyes he declares, “ Even in that case, my dear Blank, the principle remains unchanged, for you would be bought *and she would be sold !* ”

Pandemonium reigns.

And now I have done. I have striven to draw him as he was. Not half of his virtues, nor half of his foibles have been set down. He loved truth and honor and fairness ; but mostly he loved friendship and little children. He cared nothing for riches, and only a little for fame. Some measure of the last he gained, and he knew what to do with it. He forgot it. If

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we hold with Bronson Alcott that Heaven is a place in which we shall be able to get a little conversation, it is certain where you will find my father. You will find him, directly he has gotten "the lay of the land," where the wit is the keenest, the humor most humane, the laughter the heartiest, and the hope for mankind the most sure.

THE END

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By Clifton Johnson

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